

Monday Night Raw – June 11, 2012: This Is What You Get With Some Effort

Monday Night Raw

Date: June 11, 2012

Location: XL Center, Hartford, Connecticut

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the final Raw before No Way Out and it's a three hour special. The main draw tonight is that Vince is here to give Ace another performance evaluation. Also we may find out what's going on with Del Rio, who may have a legit concussion and may be out of the title match on Sunday. We might even get some more contact between Cena and Big Show tonight if we're unlucky. Let's get to it.

Theme song opens us up.

Here's Ace for the performance evaluation. Vince comes out and asks why he shouldn't be fired. Ace says people power, and that we're approaching the 100th episode of Raw. Yes, 100th. Vince asks the fans if they love people power, which of course gets booed loudly. He asks Ace about Lesnar and the big bonus to Big Show, the latter of which hasn't performed well since 1999.

Ace reminds Vince about having his head shoved into Big Show against DX. Ace says that this is the new Big Show which will be proven on Sunday in the cage. Vince makes fun of Ace's voice but gets cut off by Sheamus of all people. Vince introduces Sheamus to Ace which made me chuckle for some reason. Sheamus says he's been listening to this and that he agrees with Ace. Ace really is the friend that he says he is.

He's the kind of a guy that'll fine you half a million dollars just because he can, or carry a grudge against you for bumping into him on the way to the ring. Vince stops to point out that Fire Johnny is the #1 trend worldwide. Sheamus calls Ace the worst GM ever and Vince should fire him. Ace says that he's going to go find an opponent for Sheamus and Vince says it better be good or he's fired. Vince rides away on Ace's scooter because he's Vince McMahon. Then he shoves it off the stage and does his walk to the back.

Back from a break and it's officially confirmed that Del Rio is out of Sunday due to a concussion.

Sheamus vs. Tensai

They trade power moves to start and Sheamus pounds him into the corner. Tensai charges into a boot and Sheamus takes out the knee. Back up and Tensai hammers him down with an elbow, but Sheamus comes back with a clothesline to send both guys to the floor as we take a break. Back with Tensai working over Sheamus in the corner before hitting a running splash. Vader Bomb gets two.

Sheamus is trickling a little blood out of his mouth. Either that or his hair is melting. I guess it fires him up as he comes back with some ax handles. Tensai knocks him to the apron and we get the ten forearms from the outside instead of the inside. The top rope shoulder is caught in the Baldo Bomb but it only gets two. Back up and the Brogue Kick ends this out of nowhere at 9:19.

Rating: C. This was a hard hitting match, but it's pretty clear that Tensai isn't going to be a top main event guy. All I can say to that is phew, as his times in this spit haven't impressed me in the slightest. At the end of the day he's just Albert with a new name and nothing really that impressive to him at all. The match was a good striking battle though.

Vince says that's strike one to Ace. Vickie comes in and suggests either Ziggler or Swagger to face Sheamus or both in a triple threat match. Ace says he has a great idea but asks Teddy for his thoughts first. Teddy says there are four former world champions here, with Khali and Christian being the other two. He suggests a fourway elimination match with the winner facing Sheamus. Vince likes it too, so Ace tells teddy to go get coffee. Ace offers him a fist bump and Vince says he has small hands.

Back with Tensai destroying Sakomoto, which is a good thing as the guy never really did anything.

We hear from Seth Green about his time as guest host of Raw.

Truth says he feels fine after getting attacked by Big Show. Little Jimmy however was traumatized. Truth tells Jimmy to straighten up. On Sunday, Big Show is going to lose to Cena. And Truth is now unconscious from a right hand.

Ad for the 1000th episode, which says that DX will be there.

Santino Marella/Layla vs. Beth Phoenix/Ricardo Rodriguez

Ricardo wrestles in his tuxedo of course. The girls start but Ricardo tags himself in. Santino has to come in now so Beth tags herself back in, telling Ricardo to stay out. Layla beats up both villains and Ricardo goes to the floor. Santino comes after him with the Cobra but Ricardo runs away....right into the post. Beth kicks Layla in the knee and hits the Glam Slam for the pin at 2:57. Total comedy match.

Post match Ricardo celebrates but Santino rips his shirt off, revealing a Justin Bieber t-shirt.

Otunga sucks up to Vince who isn't impressed. Kofi storms in and demands a match with Show tonight, which is ok. Ace makes it a cage match as a

preview for No Way Out.

Here's Bryan to talk about the triple threat match. He says that one of the three wrestlers in the match is unlike the other, and it's clearly him. He's different because he doesn't have AJ to deal with on Sunday. Punk has tried to steal her after Bryan proved he was a better wrestler and Kane is fascinated by any girl that looks at him and doesn't vomit. Bryan says AJ is still obsessed with him, because once you go Bryan, you never go back. He says he'll win the title on Sunday, but here's Punk.

Punk says that for someone who is over AJ, Bryan talks about her a lot. AJ and Punk have one thing in common and that's Bryan. Outside of the ring, AJ is out of Bryan's league, and inside the ring, Punk is way out of Bryan's league. Punk likes crazy chicks, but he likes the WWE Title even more. On Sunday, it's about the title and Punk will either beat the deranged out of his mind freak, or he'll beat Kane. Either way he's leaving with the title.

Bryan: "No, No, No." Bryan says Punk has changed. He used to be the voice of the voiceless but now he panders to everyone. The people have no voice because they have nothing to say. They chant that Big Show is a sellout, but the real sellout is Punk. Punk: "So says the 'superstar' in the YES YES YES t-shirt." Punk talks about his shoot a year ago and how many people have complimented him on it since. It's not Punk that has changed, but rather the people that have changed.

Just like him, Bryan has broken through the glass ceiling, but since then he's become an insecure self-obsessed goat faced moron. The fans of course chant goat face. On Sunday, Bryan is getting a wake up call when he gets put to sleep. Cue Kane who talks about all of the things he's done on Raw, including setting fire to JR, electrocuting Shane's testicles and tombstoning a priest. His pipe bombs are actual bombs, so he'll win the title on Sunday.

This brings out AJ who says he could see it in Kane's eyes that he has a

heart. Punk: "You've gotta love crazy chicks." AJ says that you never get over your first love, and then she smiles at Punk. Punk is the coolest guy she's ever known in her life. Bryan wants to know the point of this, which AJ says is that the best man will win. Ace pops up on screen and makes Bryan/Kane vs. Punk/AJ.

Christian vs. Great Khali vs. Dolph Ziggler vs. Jack Swagger

Elimination rules and the winner gets Sheamus on Sunday. If Christian wins, Cody gets his title match at some later date. Khali chops everyone down to start and dominates, until the three blondes triple team him down. Christian hits a frog splash and they dog pile him for the pin and a break. Back with Christian getting double teamed for two. He backdrops Ziggler to the floor though and makes his comeback on Swagger.

Jack charges into an elbow in the corner and takes a jumping back version off the middle rope as well. Ziggler back in with a rollup on Christian for two, but Christian sends the team into each other. Killswitch is countered as is the corner sunset flip. The Vader Bomb hits feet and the corner sunset flip hits for two. Ankle lock goes on Christian but he makes the rope...which doesn't count for some reason. Instead he sends Swagger into the post and hits the Killswitch but Ziggler steals the pin.

Vickie yells at him, allowing Christian to roll him up for two. Ziggler works over the knee and hooks a modified half crab. That gets escaped pretty quickly so Ziggler hooks the sleeper. That gets countered as well and Christian spears him down for two. Killswitch is countered into the Zig Zag which also gets two. Christian's reverse DDT gets two and he goes up. Ziggler tries to run up the ropes but gets shoved down. Vickie's distraction lets him get up though so Christian jumps down, reinjuring his ankle. Zig Zag gives Dolph the title shot at 12:20.

Rating: B-. This was pretty good with the final pairing being exceptionally solid stuff. Ziggler was definitely the best option, but gee, wouldn't it be better if he hadn't lost almost every match he's had

in the last few months? Still though, good stuff here with everyone doing their jobs well.

Vince is talking to Natalya who wants another Hart Family gathering on Raw. Vince says he'll see them later but runs into Brodus' chicks. The Funkadactyls beg Vince to let Brodus back on Raw but he says no. A dance party ensues. Ryder pops up with his jaw hanging open. Vince says WOO WOO WOO You Know It.

Ryback vs. Willard Fillmore/Rutherford Hayes

Ryback kills one of them and the other tries to run. Ryback kills him on the floor with a clothesline then throws him over the top rope and back in from the floor. Double Samoan Buster ends this in about 1:30.

Vince and Horny are watching Horny's JR impression from Smackdown and Vince does a JR impression. Cena comes in (pop of the night) and they talk about their respective Wrestlemania failures. He wants Ace to be fired tonight and he won't help Kofi. Cena leaves and Otunga comes in, talking about how Vince shouldn't fire Ace. Vince: "No one likes someone that kisses another man's behind. No offense." The camera pans over to Regal who is sitting on the couch. Funny stuff.

Kofi Kingston vs. Big Show

Cage match. Show's entrance is after a break and Brodus vs. Otunga is announced as the pre-show match on Sunday. Kofi charges at Show to start but he gets thrown down very quickly. The beating begins with Kofi being thrown into the cage time after time. After about five minutes of Show standing around, Kofi dives at the cage wall then jumps over Show to get some separation. Trouble In Paradise gets one and Kofi goes for the door. WMD kills Kofi and Show walks out at 7:24.

Rating: D+. I was tempted to not rate this as there was maybe a minute

and a half of action in this. Show stood around A LOT in this and it got dull in a hurry. The problem here is that they made it clear what was going on in a hurry and there was no need to let it keep going. Nothing to see here but it did the job it was going for so points for that.

Sin Cara vs. Curt Hawkins

Hawkins' tights are so bright green that even the lighting can't cover them up. Cara sends him to the floor and hits a gorgeous corkscrew plancha. Hawkins trips him up and puts on a quick abdominal stretch which doesn't last long. Cara comes back with the Tajiri elbow and then steps on Hawkins' hands. He runs the ropes for the armdrag and the spinning mat slam gets the pin at 2:30.

There's a clock counting down to Vince's decision.

Bryan is getting ready in the back when Vince comes up. He says that there's an expression of you can't judge a book by its cover, and Bryan is the epitome of that. Bryan talks about how he was fired once before and had to prove his way back. Vince references the Mania loss in 18 seconds, which is faster than Vince has ever finished anything. What in the world was the point of this?

Ziggler's favorite Raw moment was the first Raw.

Heath Slater vs. ???

The opponent is a former Raw main eventer that Ace has brought in. Slater wants to know why we're talking about the past when he's the current star. He says it's Slater Time, so cue....VADER TIME??? He looks WAY better than he did that time he was at Cyber Sunday. To be fair he looks like he ate half of the Rocky Mountains but it's still an improvement. The fans go crazy for Vader and the pain begins. He destroys Slater but Heath gets in some shots. A slam attempt fails completely and the Vader

Bomb ends this at 3:14. No point in rating it but it was fine all things considered.

AJ is panicking but Punk tells her it's ok, just don't do anything crazy. She kisses him on the cheek and his face says "why me?".

Kane/Daniel Bryan vs. AJ/CM Punk

Punk tells AJ to stay on the apron while he does all the fighting. Kane starts and counters the bulldog with a big boot. Off to Bryan for some YES Kicks. After a quick chinlock Punk hits the powerslam to take him down. The Macho Elbow misses but Punk can't tag out. Kane comes in and knocks Punk into the corner which constitutes a tag. AJ comes in...and skips around Kane. He turns to look at her so she jumps into his arms and kisses him. After that, Kane walks away and it's off to Bryan. Punk kicks him down and the Macho Elbow gets the pin at 4:58.

Rating: C-. The match wasn't the point here of course but rather the storyline development. I'm really curious as to what the conclusion of this is going to be which is the whole point of the story, which means it's a success. I have no idea who is going to win on Sunday or what is going on, and I really like that feeling.

Post match AJ sits in the middle of the ring like Punk.

Here's Vince with security guards for the decision on Ace. He sucks up to Connecticut before saying that since a life began here in Hartford (Stephanie) it's appropriate that another ends here. Ace comes out and says he doesn't appreciate what happened to his scooter. The security isn't necessary because he would never attack Vince. Vince says the security is for Ace, because someone is going to be walked out of the business. Ace talks about the stuff he's done for Raw and how the company needs him for the move to three hours.

He talks about People Power which Vince says are his signature two words. Vince has his own signature two words....and here's Big Show. Show says that he can do anything he wants because he has an iron clad contract. Yeah he can be fired but then Vince would have to pay him millions of dollars for years, which Vince would never be able to do. Show says that's not Ace's fault, but rather Vince's for everything he's had to do for the past 14 years. Show has done everything Vince has asked for but now he can be what he really wants: a giant.

Instead of being worried about Ace, Vince needs to be worried about John Cena, because Show is going to destroy the golden goose. At No Way Out the feathers are going to get plucked and here's Cena. Cena says he's here on official business to get to the bottom of all this. What's left to get to the bottom of? Show has blamed Cena, the fans and Vince. Who is blamed next? McDonalds for their chicken nuggets? The only person to blame is Ace who backed up the truck full of money to Big Show, causing nothing but whining from Big Show.

Ace has said that Show can now be a giant but Cena says Show has always been one. On Sunday, the match looks so one sided that there's no challenge for Big Show. But what happens if he loses? If Show doesn't win, there's no excuse left. If Show loses, he's no longer the World's Largest Athlete, but rather the World's Largest Disappointment. He'll have to show up every week and hear the people call him a sellout.

Vince says he'll be at ringside on Sunday, sitting next to Ace. If Show loses, Ace is fired. Show grabs Cena by the throat but security pulls them apart. Cena breaks free and pounds away but Show covers up. Show swings and misses Vince by about four inches but Vince goes down anyway. It did graze the top of Vince's head so it doesn't look completely awful, but it's still bad. Show leaves to end things.

Overall Rating: B+. I had a really good time with this show tonight. First and foremost, the matches for Sunday were actually given development, especially the Raw Title match. Sheamus has a new opponent

who fits perfectly for his match and will likely give him a much better match. Show vs. Cena was already set and Cena can turn it on at the drop of a hat so him just having a cameo was fine. The Vince/Ace stuff tied the whole show together and it worked very well. This is what you call EFFORT and it pays off.

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